



SPM Users Guide

Guide to the BASIC Programming Language

*This guide provides an overview of the built-in BASIC programming
language available within SPM.*

BASIC Programming Language

MARS, and other Salford Systems' modules, contain an integrated implementation of a complete BASIC programming language for transforming variables, creating new variables, filtering cases, and database programming. Because the programming language is directly accessible anywhere in MARS, you can perform a number of database management functions without invoking the data step of another program.

The BASIC transformation language allows you to modify your input files on the fly while you are in an analysis module. Permanent copies of your changed data can be obtained with the RUN command, which does no modeling. BASIC statements are applied to the data as they are read in and before any modeling takes place, allowing variables created or modified by BASIC to be used in the same manner as unmodified variables on the input dataset.

Although this integrated version of BASIC is much more powerful than the simple variable transformation functions sometimes found in other statistical procedures, it is not meant to be a replacement for more comprehensive data steps found in statistics packages in general use. At present, integrated BASIC does not permit the merging or appending of multiple files, nor does it allow processing across observations. In Salford Systems' statistical analysis packages, the programming work space for BASIC is limited and is intended for on-the-fly data modifications of 20 to 40 lines of code (though custom large work space versions will accommodate larger BASIC programs). For more complex or extensive data manipulation, we recommend you use the large workspace for BASIC in DATA (available from Salford Systems) or your preferred database management software.

The remaining BASIC help topics describe what you can do with BASIC and provide simple examples to get you started. The BASIC help topics provide formal technical definitions of the syntax.



Getting Started with BASIC Programming Language

Your BASIC program will normally consist of a series of statements that all begin with a “%” sign. (The “%” sign can be omitted inside a DATA block.) These statements could comprise simple assignment statements that define new variables, conditional statements that delete selected cases, iterative loops that repeatedly execute a block of statements, and complex programs with the flow control provided by GOTO statements and line numbers. Thus, somewhere before a HOT! Command such as ESTIMATE or RUN in a Salford module, you might type:

```
% LET BESTMAN = WINNER
% IF MONTH=8 THEN LET GAMES = BEGIN
% ELSE IF MONTH>8 LET GAMES = ENDED
% LET ABODE= LOG (CABIN)
% DIM COLORS(10)
% FOR I= 1 TO 10 STEP 2
% LET COLORS(I) = Y * I
% NEXT
% IF SEX$="MALE" THEN DELETE
```

The % symbol appears only once at the beginning of each line of BASIC code; it should not be repeated anywhere else on the line. You can leave a space after the % symbol or you can start typing immediately; BASIC will accept your code either way.

Our programming language uses standard statements found in many dialects of BASIC.



BASIC: Overview of BASIC Components

LET

Assigns a value to a variable. The form of the statement is:

```
% LET variable = expression
```

IF...THEN

Evaluates a condition, and if it is true, executes the statement following the THEN. The form is:

```
% IF condition THEN statement
```

ELSE

Can immediately follow an IF...THEN statement to specify a statement to be executed when the preceding IF condition is false. The form is:

```
% IF condition THEN statement  
% ELSE statement
```

Alternatively, ELSE may be combined with other IF-THEN statements:

```
% IF condition THEN statement  
% ELSE IF condition THEN statement  
% ELSE IF condition THEN statement  
% ELSE statement
```

FOR...NEXT

Allows for the execution of the statements between the FOR statement and a subsequent NEXT statement as a block. The form of the simple FOR statement is:

```
% FOR  
% statements  
% NEXT
```

For example, you might execute a block of statements only if a condition is true, as in

```
%IF WINE=COUNTRY THEN FOR  
%LET FIRST=CABERNET  
%LET SECOND=RIESLING  
%NEXT
```

When an index variable is specified on the FOR statement, the statements between the FOR and NEXT statements are looped through repeatedly while the index variable remains between its lower and upper bounds:



```
% FOR [index variable and limits]
% statements
% NEXT
```

The index variable and limits form is:

```
%FOR I= start-number TO stop-number [ STEP = stepsize ]
```

where I is an integer index variable that is increased from *start-number* to *stop-number* in increments of *stepsize*. The statements in the block are processed first with I = *start-number*, then with I = *start-number* + *stepsize*, and repeated until I >=*stop-number*. If STEP=*stepsize* is omitted, the default is to step by 1. Nested FOR–NEXT loops are not allowed.

DIM

Creates an array of subscripted variables. For example, a set of five scores could be set up with:

```
% DIM SCORE (5)
```

This creates the variables SCORE(1), SCORE(2), ..., SCORE(5).

The size of the array must be specified with a literal integer up to a maximum size of 99; variable names may not be used. You can use more than one DIM statement, but be careful not to create so many large arrays that you exceed the maximum number of variables allowed (currently 8019).

DELETE

Deletes the current case from the data set.

Operators

The table below lists the operators that can be used in BASIC statement expressions. Operators are evaluated in the order they are listed in each row with one exception: a minus sign before a number (making it a negative number) is evaluated after exponentiation and before multiplication or division. The "<>" is the "not equal" operator.

Numeric Operators	()	^	*	/	+	-
Relational Operators	<	<=	<>	=	=>	>
Logical Operators	AND	OR	NOT			



BASIC Special Variables

BASIC has five built-in variables available for every data set. You can use these variables in BASIC statements and create new variables from them. You may not redefine them or change their values directly.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Values</u>
CASE	observation number	1 to maximum observation number
BOF	logical variable beginning of file	for 1 for first record in file, 0 otherwise
EOF	logical variable end of file	for 1 for last record in file, 0 otherwise
BOG	logical variable beginning of BY group	for 1 for first record in BY group, 0 otherwise
EOG	logical variable end of BY group	for 1 for last record in BY group, 0 otherwise

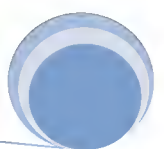
BY groups are not supported in CART, so BOG and EOG are synonymous with BOF and EOF.

BASIC Mathematical Functions

Integrated BASIC also has a number of mathematical and statistical functions. The statistical functions can take several variables as arguments and automatically adjust for missing values. Only numeric variables may be used as arguments. The general form of the function is:

FUNCTION(variable, variable, ...)

Integrated BASIC also includes a collection of probability functions that can be used to determine probabilities and confidence level critical values, and to generate random numbers.



Multiple-Argument Functions

Function	Definition	Example
AVG	arithmetic mean	%LET XMEAN=AVG(X1,X2,X3)
MAX	maximum	%LET BEST=MAX(Y1,Y2,Y3,Y4,Y5)
MIN	minimum	%LET MINCOST=MIN(PRICE1,OLDPRICE)
MIS	number of missing values	
STD	standard deviation	
SUM	summation	

Single-Argument Functions

Function	Definition	Example
ABS	absolute value	%ABSVAL=ABS(X)
ACS	arc cosine	
ASN	arc sine	
ATH	arc hyperbolic tangent	
ATN	arc tangent	
COS	cosine	
EXP	exponential	
LOG	natural logarithm	%LET LOGXY=LOG(X+Y)
SIN	sine	
SQR	square root	%LET PRICESR=SQR(PRICE)
TAN	tangent	

The following shows the distributions and any parameters that are needed to obtain values for either the random draw, the cumulative distribution, the density function, or the inverse density function. Every function name is composed of three letters:

Key-Letter:

This first letter identifies the distribution.

Distribution-Type Letters:

RN (random number), CF (cumulative),

DF (density), IF (inverse).



BASIC Probability Functions

CART BASIC also includes a collection of probability functions that can be used to determine probabilities and confidence level critical values, and to generate random numbers.

The following table shows the distributions and any parameters that are needed to obtain values for the random draw, the cumulative distribution, the density function, or the inverse density function. Every function name is composed of two parts:

The "Key" (first) letter identifies the distribution.

Remaining letters define function: RN (random number), CF (cumulative), DF (density), IF (inverse).

Distribution	Key-Letter	Random Draw (RN)	Cumulative (C) Density (D) Inverse (I)	Comments (inverse density function)

Beta	B	BRN	BCF(\square, p , \square = beta value BDF(\square, p , p, q = beta parameters BIF(\square, p, q	

Binomial	N	NRN(n,p)	NCF(x,n,p) NDF(x,n,p) NIF(a,n,p)	n = number of trials p = prob of success in trial x = binomial count

Chi-square	X	XRN(df)	XCF(\square, df XDF(\square, df XIF(\square, df	\square^2 = chi-squared valued f = degrees of freedom

Exponential	E	ERN	ECF(x) EDF(x)EIF(a)	x = exponential value

F	F	FRN(df1,df2)	FCF(F,df1,df2)	df1, df2 = degrees of freedom



FDF(F,df1,df2) F = F-value

FIF(□

Gamma	G	GRN(p)	GCF(□,p)	p = shape parameter
			GDF(□,p)	□ = gamma value
			GIF(□,p)	

Logistic	L	LRN	LCF(x)	x = logistic value
			LDF(x)	
			LIF(□)	

Normal (Standard)	Z	ZRN	ZCF(z)	z = normal z-score
			ZDF(z)	
			ZIF(a)	

Poisson	P	PRN(p)	PCF(x,p)	p = Poisson parameter
			PDF(x,p)	x = Poisson value
			PIF(□,p)	

Studentized	S	SRN(k,df)	SCF(s,k,df)	k = parameter
			SDF(s,k,df)	f = degrees of freedom
			SIF(□,k,c	

t	T	TRN(df)	TCF(t,df)	df = degrees of freedom
			TDF(t,df)	t = t-statistic
			TIF(□,df)	



Uniform	U	URN	UCF(x)	x = uniform value
			UDF(x)	
			UIF(<input type="checkbox"/>)	

Weibull	W	WRN(p,q)	WCF(x,p,q)	p = scale parameter
			WDF(x,p,q)	q = shape parameter
			WIF(<input type="checkbox"/> ,p,q	

These functions are invoked with either 0, 1, or 2 arguments as indicated in the table above, and return a single number, which is either a random draw, a cumulative probability, a probability density, or a critical value for the distribution.

We illustrate the use of these functions with the chi-square distribution. To generate 10 random draws from a chi-square distribution with 35 degrees of freedom for each case in your data set:

```
% DIM CHISQ(10)
% FOR I= 1 TO 10
% LET CHISQ(I)=XRN(35)
% NEXT
```

To evaluate the probability that a chi-square variable with 20 degrees of freedom exceeds 27.5:

```
%LET CHITAIL=1 - XCF(27.5, 20)
```

The chi-square density for the same chi-square value is obtained with:

```
%LET CHIDEN=XDF(27.5, 20)
```

Finally, the 5% point of the chi-squared distribution with 20 degrees of freedom is calculated with:

```
%LET CHICRIT=XIF(.95, 20)
```

Missing Values

The system missing value is stored internally as the largest negative number allowed. Missing values in BASIC programs and printed output are represented with a period or dot ("."), and missing values can be generated and their values tested using standard expressions.

Thus, you might type:

```
%IF NOSE=LONG THEN LET ANSWER=.
```



```
%IF STATUS=. THEN DELETE
```

Missing values are propagated so that most expressions involving variables that have missing values will themselves yield missing values.

One important fact to note: because the missing value is technically a very large negative number, the expression $X < 0$ will evaluate as true if X is missing.

BASIC statements included in your command stream are executed when a HOT! Command such as ESTIMATE, APPLY, or RUN is encountered; thus, they are processed before any estimation or tree building is attempted. This means that any new variables created in BASIC are available for use in MODEL and KEEP statements, and any cases that are deleted via BASIC will not be used in the analysis.

More Examples

It is easy to create new variables or change old variables using BASIC. The simplest statements create a new variable from other variables already in the data set. For example:

```
% LET PROFIT=PRICE *QUANTITY2* LOG(SQFTRENT), 5*SQR(QUANTITY)
```

BASIC allows for easy construction of Boolean variables, which take a value of 1 if true and 0 if false. In the following statement, the variable XYZ would have a value of 1 if any condition on the right-hand side is true, and 0 otherwise.

```
% LET XYZ = X1<.5 OR X2>17 OR X3=6
```

Suppose your data set contains variables for gender and age, and you want to create a categorical variable with levels for male-senior, female-senior, male-non-senior, female-non-senior. You might type:

```
% IF MALE = . OR AGE = . THEN LET NEWVAR = .  
% ELSE IF MALE = 1 AND AGE < 65 THEN LET NEWVAR=1  
% ELSE IF MALE = 1 AND AGE >= 65 THEN LET NEWVAR=2  
% ELSE IF MALE = 0 AND AGE < 65 THEN LET NEWVAR=3  
% ELSE LET NEWVAR = 4
```

If the measurement of several variables changed in the middle of the data period, conversions can be easily made with the following:

```
% IF YEAR > 1986 OR MEASTYPE$="OLD" THEN FOR  
% LET TEMP = (OLDTEMP-32)/1.80  
% LET DIST = OLDDIST / .621  
% NEXT  
% ELSE FOR  
% LET TEMP = OLDTEMP  
% LET DIST = OLDDIST  
% NEXT
```



If you would like to create powers of a variable (square, cube, etc.) as independent variables in a polynomial regression, you could type something like:

```
% DIM AGEPWR(5)
% FOR I = 1 TO 5
% LET AGEPWR(I) = AGEI
% NEXT
```

Filtering the Data Set or Splitting the Data Set

Integrated BASIC can be used for flexibly filtering observations. To remove observations with SSN missing, try:

```
% IF SSN= . THEN DELETE
```

To delete the first 10 observations, type:

```
% IF CASE <= 10 THEN DELETE
```

Because you can construct complex Boolean expressions with BASIC, using programming logic combined with the DELETE statement gives you far more control than is available with the simple SELECT statement. For example:

```
% IF AGE>50 OR INCOME<15000 OR (REGION=9 AND GOLF=.) THEN DELETE
```

It is often useful to draw a random sample from a data set to fit a problem into memory or to speed up a preliminary analysis. By using the uniform random number generator in BASIC, this is easily accomplished with a one-line statement:

```
% IF URN < .5 THEN DELETE
```

The data set can be divided into an analysis portion and a separate test portion distinguished by the variable TEST:

```
% LET TEST= URN < .4
```

This sets TEST equal to 1 in approximately 40% of all cases and 0 in all other cases. The following draws a stratified random sample taking 10% of the first stratum and 50% of all other strata:

```
% IF DEPVAR = 1 AND URN < .1 THEN DELETE
% ELSE IF DEPVAR<>1 AND URN < .5 THEN DELETE
```



DATA Blocks

A DATA block is a block of statements appearing between a DATA command and a DATA END command. These statements are treated as BASIC statements, even though they do not start with "%." Here is an example:

```
DATA
let ranbeta1=brn(.25,.75)
let ranbeta2=brn(.75,.25)
let ranbin1=nrn(100,.25)
let ranbin2=nrn(500,.75)
let ranchi1=xrn(1)
let ranchi2=xrn(2)
DATA END
```

Advanced Programming Features

Integrated BASIC also allows statements to have line numbers that facilitate the use of flow control with GOTO statements. Line numbers must be integers less than 32000, and we recommend that if you use any line numbers at all, all your BASIC statements should be numbered. BASIC will execute the numbered statements in the order of the line numbers, regardless of the order in which the statements are typed, and unnumbered BASIC statements are executed before numbered statements.

Here is an example of using the GOTO:

```
%10 IF PARTY=GOP THEN GOTO 96
%20 LET NEWDEM=1
%30 LET VEEP$="GORE"
%40 GOTO 99
%96 LET VEEP$="KEMP"
%99 LET CAMPAIGN=1
```

BASIC Programming Language Commands

The following pages contain a summary of the BASIC programming language commands. They include syntax usage and examples.



DELETE Statement

Purpose

Drops the current case from the data set.

Syntax

```
% DELETE  
% IF condition THEN DELETE
```

Examples

To keep a random sample of 75% of a data set for analysis:

```
% IF URN < .25 THEN DELETE
```



DIM Statement

Purpose

Creates an array of subscripted variables.

Syntax

```
% DIM var (n)
```

where *n* is a literal integer. Variables of the array are then referenced by variable name and subscript, such as *var*(1), *var*(2), etc.

In an expression, the subscript can be another variable, allowing these array variables to be used in FOR...NEXT loop processing. See the section on the FOR...NEXT statement for more information.

Examples

```
% DIM QUARTER (4)  
% DIM MONTH (12)  
% DIM REGION (9)
```



ELSE Statement

Purpose

Follows an IF...THEN to specify statements to be executed when the condition following a preceding IF is false.

Syntax

The simplest form is:

```
% IF condition THEN statement1  
% ELSE statement2
```

The statement2 can be another IF...THEN condition, thus allowing IF...THEN statements to be linked into more complicated structures. For more information see the section for IF...THEN.

Examples

```
% 5 IF TRUE=1 THEN GOTO 20  
% 10 ELSE GOTO 30  
% IF AGE <=2 THEN LET AGEDES$ = "baby"  
% ELSE IF AGE <= 18 THEN LET AGEDES$ = "child"  
% ELSE IF AGE < 65 THEN LET AGEDES$ = "adult"  
% ELSE LET AGEDES$ = "senior"
```



FOR...NEXT Statement

Purpose

Allows the processing of steps between the FOR statement and an associated NEXT statement as a block. When an optional index variable is specified, the statements are looped through repetitively while the value of the index variable is in a specified range.

Syntax

The form is:

```
% FOR [index variable and limits]  
% statements  
% NEXT
```

The index variable and limits is optional, but if used, it is of the form

```
x = y TO z [STEP=s]
```

where *x* is an index variable that is increased from *y* to *z* in increments of *s*. The statements are processed first with *x* = *y*, then with *x* = *y* + *s*, and so on until *x* = *z*. If *STEP=s* is omitted, the default is to step by 1.

Remarks

Nested FOR...NEXT loops are not allowed and a GOTO which is external to the loop may not refer to a line within the FOR...NEXT loop. However, GOTOs may be used to leave a FOR...NEXT loop or to jump from one line in the loop to another within the same loop.

Examples

To have an IF...THEN statement execute more than one statement if it is true:

```
% IF X<15 THEN FOR  
% LET Y=X+4  
% LET Z=X-2  
% NEXT
```



GOTO Statement

Purpose

Jumps to a specified numbered line in the BASIC program.

Syntax

The form for the statement is:

```
% GOTO ##
```

where ## is a line number within the BASIC program.

Remarks

This is often used with an IF...THEN statement to allow certain statements to be executed only if a condition is met.

If line numbers are used in a BASIC program, all lines of the program should have a line number. Line numbers must be positive integers less than 32000.

Examples

```
% 10 GOTO 20
% 20 STOP
% 10 IF X=. THEN GOTO 40
% 20 LET Z=X*2
% 30 GOTO 50
% 40 LET Z=0
% 50 STOP
```



IF... THEN Statement

Purpose

Evaluates a condition and, if it is true, executes the statement following the THEN.

Syntax

```
% IF condition THEN statement
```

An IF...THEN may be combined with an ELSE statement in two ways. First, the ELSE may be simply used to provide an alternative statement when the condition is not true:

```
% IF condition THEN statement1  
% ELSE statement2
```

Second, the ELSE may be combined with an IF...THEN to link conditions:

```
% IF condition THEN statement  
% ELSE IF condition2 THEN statement2
```

To allow multiple statements to be conditionally executed, combine the IF...THEN with a FOR...NEXT:

```
% IF condition THEN FOR  
% statement  
% statement  
% NEXT
```

Examples

To remove outlier cases from the data set:

```
% IF ZCF(ABS((z-zmean)/zstd))>.95 THEN DELETE
```



LET Statement

Purpose

Assign a value to a variable.

Syntax

The form of the statement is:

```
% LET variable = expression
```

The expression can be any mathematical expression, or a logical Boolean expression. If the expression is Boolean, then the variable defined will take a value of 1 if the expression is true or 0 if it is false. The expression may also contain logical operators such as AND, OR and NOT.

Examples

```
% LET AGEMONTH = YEAR - BYEAR + 12*(MONTH , BMONTH)  
% LET SUCCESS =(MYSPEED = MAXSPEED)  
% LET COMPLETE = (OVER = 1 OR END=1)
```



STOP Statement

Purpose

Stops the processing of the BASIC program on the current observation. The observation is kept but any BASIC statements following the STOP are not executed.

Syntax

The form of the statement is:

% STOP

Examples

```
%10 IF X = 10 THEN GOTO 40  
%20 ELSE STOP  
%40 LET X = 15
```

